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# The secrets of Oleg Penkovsky

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But this was only a cover. His real post, both before and after transferring his allegiance to the West, was that of a senior officer of the Soviet military intelligence organisation, the G.R.U. He was also a missile expert, married to a general's daughter, and on familiar terms with a vast number of Soviet General Staff officers and party bosses.

THE OBSERVER has secured newspaper publication rights of one of the most dramatic and controversial documents about military intelligence ever to be made public. It is a collection of secret papers written by Oleg Penkovsky, the Soviet official sentenced to death after the Greville Wynne trial.

The papers show that Penkovsky, far from being the decadent playboy portrayed by the Soviet prosecutor, was probably the most highly placed Western agent ever to fall into the hands of the Soviet security service.

Those who knew Penkovsky, including Major Wynne, who stood trial with him, are adamant in their belief that the papers are authentic, though they have obviously been heavily cut, probably by the American Central Intelligence Agency, through which they passed before being offered for publication.

Penkovsky wrote in haste and at night, foreseeing the possibility of his arrest, and hid the papers in a secret place in his Moscow flat. By day he resumed his job with the State Committee for the Co-ordination of Scientific Research.

From his privileged position Penkovsky provided Western agents with the deployment pattern of Soviet missile sites, which enabled American air reconnaissance to spot the setting up of missiles in Cuba. He also provided them with vital information about Soviet aims and contingency plans during the Berlin crisis of 1961.

But his most sensational contribution to Western intelligence, as revealed in the papers, was a series of reports on the state of Soviet missile technology and the morale of the Soviet armed forces.

The papers deal at length with the Red Army's mounting hostility to Mr Khrushchev after cuts in pay and pensions to provide funds for a rocket programme. They describe, for the first time, the early failures and disasters of this programme, including the explosion of a nuclear-powered missile which killed the chief of the Soviet missile forces, Marshal Nedelin, and 300 officers.

THE OBSERVER will publish a series of extracts from the Penkovsky papers shortly.

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